GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2140
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2001
DAMAGE TO RESERVOIRS
BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUE

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any contingency plan to meet the situation arising out of 70 major reservoirs in the country going dry due to a waterless, warm and weired winter;

(b) if so, whether the Government have surveyed the adversely affected areas to assess the extent of damage done; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith preventive steps taken in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SMT. BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY)

(a) A Drought Contingency Action Plan has been formulated and circulated among the drought affected States to meet the situation arising due to deficient monsoon/ post- monsoon rainfall and insufficient water availability in some of the reservoirs.

(b) & (c) The concerned State Governments conduct surveys of the adversely affected areas. Inter-Ministerial Central Teams are also deputed to visit the affected areas to assess the extent of damage and to review steps already taken and further assistance required by the State Governments. Central Teams visited affected areas in Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orisssa, Rajasthan and Gujarat during November- December 2000. A Group of Ministers is regularly reviewing the situation and National Crisis Management Committee is monitoring and co-ordinating drought mitigation efforts. The Central Government has supplemented the efforts of the concerned State Governments to tackle the situation, in the following manner:-

(i) Assistance of Rs. 280 crore released to Gujarat, Rajasthan, orissa, Chhatisgarh and Himachal Pradesh under National Calamity Contingency fund.

(ii) Central Ground Water Board handed over tube wells to the States for drinking water purposes.

(iii) Additional allocation of food grains to drought affected States.

(iv) Ministry of Railways to transport water and fodder free of cost.

(v) Order issued to ban movement of fodder outside drought affected States, wherever request received from the States.

(vi) 5.00 lakh Metric Ton of food grains allocated for Food for Work Programme, free of cost, and 1.70 lakh Metric Ton 'Feed Grade' food grains released to drought affected States for use as cattle feed.

States have also been advised to enhance employment generation under various schemes and expedite utilisation of Central funds already made available.

Government has taken various short and long term measures which, inter-alia, include the following:-

- Advice to the State Governments to regulate the releases from the reservoirs keeping in view possible water deficit and also making curtailment for irrigation in consultation with the State Agriculture Departments

- Technical and financial assistance for promotion of Rain Water Harvesting through Watershed Management Programme, Artificial Recharge of Ground Water and roof-top rain water harvesting.

- A model Bill circulated to the States for enacting legislation to ensure regulation of ground water in a scientific manner

- National Perspective Plan formulated for inter-linking various Peninsular Rivers and Himalayan Rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins

- Water Resources Consolidation Projects taken up with the assistance of World Bank to improve efficiency of irrigation water use